

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal patterns for the NSLP, SBP, and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP have different requirements for preschoolers (ages 1-4) and grades K-12. The meal patterns for grades K-12 are defined by the regulations for the NSLP (7 CFR 210.10) and SBP (7 CFR 220.8). The requirements for preschoolers are defined by the USDA regulations for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) below, which update the meal patterns for preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, SSO, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP).

- Final Rule (81 FR 24347): *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (April 25, 2016): <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/04/25/2016-09412/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>
- Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671): *CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (November 1, 2016): <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/11/01/2016-26339/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>
- Final Rule (84 FR 50287): *Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program* (September 25, 2019): <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program>



This document summarizes the meal pattern requirements and applicable resources for each school nutrition program. School food authorities (SFAs) must ensure that all foods served in school meals meet the specific meal pattern requirements for each grade group. For information on the meal patterns for grades K-12, review the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) guide, [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE's webpages, [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#). For information on the preschool meal patterns, review the CSDE's guide, [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#), and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For a comparison of the meal pattern requirements for preschoolers and grades K-12 in the ASP, see the CSDE's handout, [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP](#).

This information is subject to change as the USDA continues to issue policy guidance on the preschool meal patterns. The CSDE will notify ASP sponsors when new guidance is available.

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Serving the Same Foods to Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO

SFAs must consider the different meal pattern requirements when making menu planning and purchasing decisions for school meals that include grades K-12 and preschoolers. When SFAs serve the same foods to both groups, these foods must comply with whichever meal pattern requirements are stricter. The examples below illustrate this requirement:

- The NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 have stricter whole grain-rich (WGR) criteria than the preschool meal patterns. Grain foods served to both groups must comply with the WGR criteria for grades K-12. **Note:** Grain-based desserts do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. For more information, see “G4: WGR Requirement” and “G7: Grain-based Desserts.”
- The preschool meal patterns require a sugar limit for yogurt and breakfast cereals, but the meal patterns for grades K-12 do not. Yogurt and breakfast cereals served to both groups must comply with the preschool sugar limits. For more information, see “MMA7: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt” and “G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals.”

The only exceptions to these requirements are when SFAs choose to follow the K-5 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat together in the same service area at the same time.

Preschoolers and grades K-5 eating together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO

SFAs that serve meals to preschoolers and grades K-5 in the same service area at the same time may choose to 1) follow the grade-appropriate meal patterns for each grade group (i.e., use the preschool meal patterns for ages 1-4 and the K-5 meal pattern for grades K-5); or 2) serve the K-5 meal pattern to both grade groups. SFAs must follow the preschool meal pattern when meals are served to preschoolers in a different area or at a different time than K-5 students. The USDA allows the option to serve the K-5 meal pattern to preschoolers only when preschoolers are co-mingled with K-5 students during the meal service. For more information, see [USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#).

Keep in mind that the preschool meal pattern provides the amounts and types of foods at meals that most younger children need for healthy growth and development. The USDA strongly encourages SFAs to find ways to serve grade-appropriate meals to preschoolers and older students to best address their nutritional needs. For more information, see [USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#).

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meal Pattern (MP)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
MP1: Implementation	<p>Meal pattern changes: The new NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns were effective October 1, 2017, except for grain ounce equivalents. The USDA's final rule, CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, indicated that grain ounce equivalents were effective on October 1, 2019. However, the USDA's final rule, Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (84 FR 50287), extends the implementation date to October 1, 2021.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 USDA Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program USDA Memo SP 30-2017 and CACFP 13-2017: Transition Period for the Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns and the Updated National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns</p>	<p>Meal pattern changes for school year 2020-21: On August 21, 2020, the USDA released information about a decision in April 2020 by the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland that vacates (cancels) the USDA's 2018 final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements (83 FR 63775). This eliminates the previously approved meal pattern flexibilities, and reverts back to the 2012 NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Therefore, for school year 2020-21 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021), flavored milk must be fat-free; all grains must be whole-grain rich; and school lunches and breakfasts must meet sodium target 2, as defined in 7 CFR 210.10(c) and 220.8(c). For more information, see question 7 in USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5.</p> <p>Meal pattern waiver option: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the USDA's COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #36, Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs – Extension #4 waives the requirements to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements during school year 2020-21. The USDA is allowing SFAs to use this meal pattern flexibility if they cannot meet the 2012 meal pattern requirements. SFAs must apply to the CSDE to implement this waiver. For more information, visit the “Current Waivers and Applications for the NSLP and SBP (School Year 2020-21)” section of the CSDE's Child Nutrition Programs webpage.</p> <p>Resources: National School Lunch Program Regulations (7 CFR 210.10) School Breakfast Program Regulations (7 CFR 220.8) USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meal Pattern, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
MP2: Age/Grade Groups	<p>Two age groups: Ages 1-2 and ages 3-4</p> <p>When a 5-year-old is in preschool or a 4-year-old is in kindergarten, the SFA may continue to serve the appropriate meal pattern for that grade.</p> <p>Resources: Breakfast Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Three grade groups: Grades K-5; grades 6-8; and grades 9-12</p> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Milk Component (M)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
M1: Milk	<p>Allowable types of milk: Unflavored whole milk for ages 1-2 and unflavored low-fat milk or unflavored fat-free milk for ages 3-4.</p> <p>Milk variety: Not required. SFAs may serve one type of allowable milk to all preschoolers.</p> <p>State milk requirement: In addition to the USDA requirements, all milk served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.). Milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in list 16 on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage.</p> <p>Resources: Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage) List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage) Milk Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) Serving Milk in the CACFP (USDA) USDA Memo CACFP 17-2016: Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the CACFP, Q&As</p>	<p>Allowable types of milk: Unflavored low-fat milk, unflavored fat-free milk, and flavored fat-free milk (see “MP1: Implementation”).</p> <p>Milk variety: Must serve a variety of milk (at least two different choices of fat content or flavor). At least once choice must be unflavored.</p> <p>State milk requirement: In addition to USDA requirements, all milk served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-221q. Milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in list 16 on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage.</p> <p>Resources: Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage) CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 06-19: Summary of Federal and State Milk Requirements for the NSLP, SBP, SSO of the NSLP, ASP of the NSLP, and Special Milk Program (SMP) List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage) Milk Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Milk Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
M2: Nondairy Milk Substitutes for Children without a Disability	<p>Allowable nondairy beverages: Nondairy beverages that are nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk may be served to children with special dietary needs if requested in writing by a parent or guardian. The nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes are defined by the regulations for the NSLP (7 CFR 210.10).</p> <p>Breastmilk: Breastmilk meets the milk component and may be served in place of fluid milk. A written request is not required.</p> <p>Other beverages: SFAs cannot offer any other beverages (including water and juice) in place of milk for reimbursable meals in the NSLP and SBP.</p> <p>State requirement: In addition to the USDA requirements, all nondairy milk substitutes served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q. Nondairy milk substitutes must contain no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat, and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in list 17 on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage.</p> <p>Resources: Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the USDA School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage) List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage) USDA Memo CACFP 17-2016: Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the CACFP, Q&As USDA Memo SP 07-2010, CACFP 04-2010 and SFSP 05-2010: Questions and Answers: Fluid Milk Substitutions</p>	Same

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component (MMA)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
MMA1: Serving Size	<p>Amount: The preschool meal patterns list the meat/meat alternates component in ounces. A 1-ounce serving of the meat/meat alternates component equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; • 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended); • 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread, or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended); • ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas; • ½ large egg; • 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, and sunflower seed butter; • 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts; • ¼ cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein; • 1 ounce of tempeh (see “MMA5: Tempeh”); • 3 ounces of surimi (see “MMA4: Surimi”); • ½ cup (volume) or 4 ounces (weight) of yogurt or soy yogurt containing no more than 3.83 grams of sugars per ounce (see “MMA7: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt”); and • 1 ounce of alternate protein product (APP) that meets the USDA’s APP requirements. 	<p>Amount: The meal patterns for grades K-12 lists the meat/meat alternates component in ounce equivalents. A 1-ounce equivalent serving of the meat/meat alternates component equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; • 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended); • 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread, or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended); • ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas; • ½ large egg; • 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, and sunflower seed butter; • 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts; • ¼ cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein; • 1 ounce of tempeh (see “MMA5: Tempeh”); • 3 ounces of surimi (see “MMA4: Surimi”); • ½ cup (volume) or 4 ounces (weight) of yogurt or soy (see “MMA7: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt”); and • 1 ounce of alternate protein product (APP) that meets the USDA’s APP requirements.

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
MMA1: Serving Size, <i>continued</i>	<p>Edible portion: The serving size of the meat/meat alternates component refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients. A serving of the meat/meat alternates component is sometimes more than a measured ounce, depending on the food's density and nutrition content.</p> <p>Resources: Food Buying Guide Section 1: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 1: Yield Table for Meat/Meat Alternates (USDA) Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Edible portion: The serving size of the meat/meat alternates component refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients. An ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component is sometimes more than a measured ounce, depending on the food's density and nutrition content.</p> <p>Resources: Food Buying Guide Section 1: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 1: Yield Table for Meat/Meat Alternates(USDA) Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>																	
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)															
MMA2: Weekly Ranges for Meat/Meat Alternates	<p>Breakfast: No weekly minimums or maximums for the meat/meat alternates component.</p> <p>Lunch: No weekly minimums or maximums for the meat/meat alternates component.</p>	<p>Breakfast: No weekly minimums or maximums for the meat/meat alternates component.</p> <p>Lunch: The lunch meal pattern requires weekly ranges for the meat/meat alternates component. Menus cannot offer less than the minimum weekly ounce equivalents. The maximum weekly amount is not required, but provides a guide for planning age-appropriate meals that meet the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium (see “DS1: Dietary Specifications”).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Required weekly meat/meat alternate ounce equivalents</th></tr> <tr> <th>Grade group</th><th>Five-day week</th><th>Seven-day week</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K-5</td><td>8-10</td><td>11-14</td></tr> <tr> <td>6-8</td><td>9-10</td><td>12½-14</td></tr> <tr> <td>9-12</td><td>10-12</td><td>14-17</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</p>	Required weekly meat/meat alternate ounce equivalents			Grade group	Five-day week	Seven-day week	K-5	8-10	11-14	6-8	9-10	12½-14	9-12	10-12	14-17
Required weekly meat/meat alternate ounce equivalents																	
Grade group	Five-day week	Seven-day week															
K-5	8-10	11-14															
6-8	9-10	12½-14															
9-12	10-12	14-17															

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
MMA3: Meat/Meat Alternates at Breakfast	<p>Meat/meat alternate substitutions: The SBP meal pattern does not require the meat/meat alternates component. SFAs may substitute the meat/meat alternates component for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week (regardless of the number of days in the week).</p> <p>Meat/meat alternates as extra foods: SFAs may serve meat/meat alternates as extra foods at breakfast.</p> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Serving Meat and Meat Alternates at Breakfast (USDA)</p>	<p>Meat/meat alternate substitutions: The SBP meal pattern does not require the meat/meat alternates component. SFAs may substitute 1 ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component for 1 ounce equivalent of the grains component at breakfast, after offering the minimum daily 1 ounce equivalent of grains. Meat/meat alternates substituted for grains at breakfast count toward the weekly grain minimum for each age group (see “G3: Weekly Ranges for Grains”).</p> <p>Meat/meat alternates as extra foods: SFAs may serve meat/meat alternates as extra foods at breakfast, within the dietary specifications for the weekly menu (see “DS1: Dietary Specifications”).</p> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</p>
MMA4: Surimi	<p>Crediting: A 3-ounce serving of surimi credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. To credit surimi seafood differently, SFAs must obtain a CN label or manufacturer’s PFS that documents how the crediting is determined.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 24-2019, CACFP 11-2019 and SFSP 10-2019: Crediting Surimi Seafood in the Child Nutrition Programs.</p>	<p>Same</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
MMA5: Tempeh	<p>Crediting: A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. This method of crediting applies only to tempeh products whose ingredients are limited to soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. If a tempeh product contains other ingredients, SFAs must obtain a CN label or PFS to document crediting.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 25-2019, CACFP 12-2019 and SFSP 11-2019: Crediting Tempeh in the Child Nutrition Programs USDA Webinar: Additional Meat/Meat Alternates Options for CNPs: Crediting Tempeh and Surimi</p>	Same
MMA6: Tofu and Tofu Products	<p>Crediting: Tofu and tofu products credit as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component if they contain 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces by weight (1/4 cup).</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 53-2016 and CACFP 21-2016: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meal Programs and the CACFP</p>	Same
MMA7: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt	<p>Sugar limit: No more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (≤ 3.83 grams per ounce).</p> <p>Resources: Calculating Sugar Limits for Yogurt in the CACFP (USDA) Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA) Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>	<p>Sugar limit: None</p> <p>Serving the same yogurt/soy yogurt to preschoolers and grades K-12: If SFAs serve the same yogurt or soy yogurt to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must comply with the preschool sugar limit for yogurt and soy yogurt. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-5 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat in the same service</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
		area at the same time (see “Preschoolers and grades K-5 eating together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).
Vegetables Component and Fruits Component (VF)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
VF1: Components	<p>Breakfast: Vegetables and fruits are one component. Schools may serve vegetables, fruits, or both.</p> <p>Lunch: Vegetables and fruits are two separate components.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers Fruits Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) Vegetables Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Breakfast: The SBP meal pattern requires the fruits component. Through June 30, 2021, SFAs may substitute any vegetables for the fruits component at any breakfast (see “VF2: Vegetable Subgroups”).</p> <p>Lunch: Vegetables and fruits are two separate components.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 06-2020: School Breakfast Program: Continuation of the Substitution of Vegetables for Fruit Flexibility Fruits Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage) Vegetables Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

<p>VF2: Vegetable Subgroups</p>	<p>Breakfast: No requirement.</p> <p>Lunch: No requirement.</p> <p>Recommendation: The USDA's <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, <i>Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP</i>.</p> <p>Resources: CACFP Best Practices (USDA) Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 25-2016: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Breakfast: No requirement.</p> <p>Lunch: SFAs must offer specific amounts of the five vegetable subgroups each week, including dark green vegetables, red/orange vegetables, beans and peas, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, <i>Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP</i>.</p> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP (CSDE)</p>
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Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
VF3: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits	<p>Crediting amounts: All vegetables and fruits credit based on the volume served, except for dried fruits and raw leafy greens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried fruits: Credit as twice the amount served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit equals ½ cup of the fruits component. Examples of dried fruits include raisins, apricots, dried cherries, dried cranberries, dried blueberries, mixed dried fruit, and dried coconut. • Raw leafy greens: Credit as half the amount served, e.g., 1 cup of raw leafy greens equals ½ cup of the vegetables component. Examples of raw leafy greens include kale, greens (e.g., beet, collard, mustard, and turnip), spinach, arugula, and lettuce such as iceberg, romaine, Boston, Bibb, red leaf, and spring mix. <p>Resources: Food Buying Guide Section 2: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Vegetables Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 2: Yield Table for Vegetables (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 3: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Fruits Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 3: Yield Table for Fruits (USDA) Fruits Component for Preschoolers (CSDE) Vegetables Component for Preschoolers (CSDE) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA)</p>	Same

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
VF4: Coconut	<p>Fresh and frozen coconut: Credit as the fruits component based on the volume served. For example, 1/8 cup of fresh or frozen coconut credits as 1/8 cup of the fruits component. The minimum serving is 1/8 cup.</p> <p>Dried coconut: Credits the same as other dried fruits, i.e., as twice the volume served (see “VF3: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits”).</p> <p>Coconut water: Juices labeled as 100 percent juice, including coconut water, credit toward the fruits component based on the volume served. SFAs must count coconut water with all other juices toward the juice limit (see “VF5: Full-strength (100%) juice”).</p> <p>Crediting considerations: Menu planners should consider coconut’s high caloric and saturated fat content, which may limit its frequency in school menus. Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk do not credit.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs:</p>	Same

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
VF5: Full-strength (100%) Juice	<p>Juice limit: Juice may count toward the entire vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day, between all meals (NSLP and SBP) and snacks (ASP) served to preschoolers. The juice limit includes all sources of 100 percent juice, including juice that is fresh, frozen, and made from concentrate, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice.</p> <p>Juice from canned fruit: Counts toward the weekly juice limit only if the SFA credits the juice toward the fruits component. Juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit if the SFA plans the juice as an extra food that does not credit toward the meal patterns. For example, the juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit if food service personnel portion ½ cup of canned fruit in a 5½-ounce container and add the juice <i>after</i> measuring the full ½-cup serving of fruit. Drained canned fruit and canned fruit in light syrup or water do not count toward the juice limit.</p> <p>Beverage limit at snack: Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.</p> <p>Best practice: The USDA's <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends serving a variety of fruits and choosing whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juice.</p>	<p>Fruit juice limit at lunch: Fruit juice cannot exceed half of the weekly amount (cups) of fruits offered at lunch. The juice limit includes all sources of 100 percent juice, including juice that is fresh, frozen, and made from concentrate, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice.</p> <p>Vegetable juice limit at lunch: Vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly amount (cups) of vegetables offered at lunch. The juice limit includes all sources of 100 percent juice, including juice that is fresh, frozen, and made from concentrate, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice.</p> <p>Juice limit at breakfast: Fruit juice together with vegetable juice (including fruit/vegetable juice blends) cannot exceed half of the total amount (cups) of fruits and vegetables offered at breakfast during the week</p> <p>Juice from canned fruit: Counts toward the weekly juice limit only if the SFA credits the juice toward the fruits component. Juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit if the SFA plans the juice as an extra food that does not credit toward the meal patterns. For example, the juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit if food service personnel portion ½ cup of canned fruit in a 5½-ounce container and add the juice <i>after</i> measuring the full ½-cup serving of fruit. Drained canned fruit and canned fruit in light syrup or water do not count toward the juice limit.</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
VF5: Full-strength (100%) Juice, <i>continued</i>	Resources: Crediting Juice for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Crediting of Smoothies in Child Nutrition Programs	Resources: Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Crediting of Smoothies in Child Nutrition Programs

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component (G)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G1: Creditable Grains	<p>Creditable grains: Whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ).</p> <p>Corn: Corn ingredients credit if they are whole grain, enriched, or treated with lime (nixtamalized). Nixtamalization is a process in which dried corn is soaked and cooked in an alkaline (slaked lime) solution. This process increases the bioavailability of certain nutrients and provides a nutritional profile similar to whole-grain corn.</p> <p>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina: Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. However, cornmeal and corn flour do not credit unless they are whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized. If the product's ingredients statement does not provide sufficient information, SFAs must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document that cornmeal and corn flour ingredients meet one of these requirements.</p>	<p>Creditable grains: Whole and enriched grains.</p> <p>Corn: Corn ingredients credit if they are whole grain, enriched, or treated with lime (nixtamalized). Nixtamalization is a process in which dried corn is soaked and cooked in an alkaline (slaked lime) solution. This process increases the bioavailability of certain nutrients and provides a nutritional profile similar to whole-grain corn.</p> <p>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina: Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. However, cornmeal and corn flour do not credit unless they are whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized. If the product's ingredients statement does not provide sufficient information, SFAs must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer to document that cornmeal and corn flour ingredients meet one of these requirements. Corn flour ingredients that are not whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized count toward the limit for noncreditable grains under the WGR criteria (see "G5: WGR Criteria").</p> <p>Bran and germ: SFAs must count bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ) with all other noncreditable grains toward the limit for noncreditable grains required by the USDA's WGR criteria for school meals (see "G5: WGR Criteria").</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G1: Creditable Grains, <i>continued</i>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Grains Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p> <p>How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</p> <p>Grains Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators</p> <p>Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G2: Serving Size	<p>Required amounts: The meal pattern lists the grains component in servings through September 30, 2021, and changes to ounce equivalents effective October 1, 2021. The required preschool amount is ½ serving/ounce equivalent.</p> <p>Methods to determine grain servings/ounce equivalents: The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain servings/ounce equivalents of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method 1 uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA's chart, Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-G) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE's handout, Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP, lists the Exhibit A servings that apply to the NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns through September 30, 2021. The CSDE's handout, Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP, lists the Exhibit A ounce equivalents that apply to the NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns effective October 1, 2021. Groups F and G are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in the preschool meal patterns. 	<p>Required amounts: The meal pattern lists the grains component in ounce equivalents. An ounce equivalent is the amount of food that meets the USDA's requirement for 1 ounce of the grains component in the NSLP and the SBP meal patterns.</p> <p>Methods to determine grain ounce equivalents: The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain ounce equivalents of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method 1 uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA's chart, Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-G) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE's handout, Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP, lists the Exhibit A ounce equivalents that apply to the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12.

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G2: Serving Size, <i>continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Method 2 calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer's serving or recipe serving. To credit as ½ serving through September 30, 2021, a food in groups A-G must contain 7.38 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 13 grams of creditable grains. To credit as ½ ounce equivalent effective October 1, 2021, a food in groups A-G must contain 8 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 14 grams of creditable grains. Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) and a standardized recipe for foods made on site (listing the weight of creditable grains). <p>When method 2 is required: There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA's Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain servings or ounce equivalents for commercial products. For more information, and detailed guidance on both methods, see the CSDE's handout, see the CSDE's handout, Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Method 2 calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer's serving or recipe serving. A food in groups A-G must contain 16 grams of creditable grains to credit as 1 ounce equivalent, and at least 8 grams of whole grains per ounce equivalent to be WGR. A food in group H must contain 28 grams of creditable grains to credit as 1 ounce equivalent, and at least 14 grams of whole grains per ounce equivalent to be WGR. Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) and a standardized recipe for foods made on site (listing the weight of creditable grains). <p>When method 2 is required: There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA's Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain ounce equivalents for commercial products. For more information, and detailed guidance on both methods, see the CSDE's handout, see the CSDE's handout, Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP.</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G2: Serving Size, <i>continued</i>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</p> <p>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (effective October 1, 2021)(CSDE)</p> <p>Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (through September 30, 2021) (CSDE)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</p> <p>Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA)</p> <p>Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</p> <p>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</p> <p>Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</p> <p>Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (USDA)</p> <p>Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA)</p> <p>Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>																																
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)																														
G3: Weekly Ranges for Grains	Weekly requirement: None	<p>Weekly requirement: The lunch and breakfast meal patterns require weekly ranges for the grains component. Menus are not required to comply with the maximums, but must meet the minimums and stay within the weekly calorie range for each age group. The weekly maximum provides a guide for planning age-appropriate meals that meet the dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, and sodium (see “DS1: Dietary Specifications”).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at breakfast</th></tr> <tr> <th>Grade group</th><th>Five-day week</th><th>Seven-day week</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K-5</td><td>7-10</td><td>10-14</td></tr> <tr> <td>6-8</td><td>8-10</td><td>11-14</td></tr> <tr> <td>9-12</td><td>9-10</td><td>12½-14</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at lunch</th></tr> <tr> <th>Grade group</th><th>Five-day week</th><th>Seven-day week</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K-5</td><td>8-9</td><td>11-12½</td></tr> <tr> <td>6-8</td><td>8-10</td><td>11-14</td></tr> <tr> <td>9-12</td><td>10-12</td><td>14-17</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (Grades K-12) (CSDE)</p>	Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at breakfast			Grade group	Five-day week	Seven-day week	K-5	7-10	10-14	6-8	8-10	11-14	9-12	9-10	12½-14	Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at lunch			Grade group	Five-day week	Seven-day week	K-5	8-9	11-12½	6-8	8-10	11-14	9-12	10-12	14-17
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Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G4 WGR Requirement	<p>Frequency: At least one serving per day must be WGR, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers. The USDA's CACFP Best Practices recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day.</p> <p>Documentation: SFAs must maintain documentation to indicate that at least one serving per day is WGR. SFAs must obtain a PFS for commercial foods and a standardized recipe for foods prepared on site.</p> <p>Best practice: Serve only WGR grains and serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p> <p>Resources: Adding Whole Grains to Your CACFP Menu (USDA) CACFP Best Practices (USDA) Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage) Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Foods Prepared on Site in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage) Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Frequency: For school year 2020-21, all grains must be WGR. Products that contain only enriched grains do not credit (see “MP1: Implementation” and “G6: Products Containing Only Enriched Grains (No Whole Grains)”).</p> <p>Documentation: SFAs must maintain documentation on file to indicate that all grains are WGR. SFAs must obtain a PFS for commercial foods and a standardized recipe for foods prepared on site.</p> <p>Best practice: Serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-2021 USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G5: WGR Criteria	<p>Commercial products: A whole grain must be the first ingredient (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the second ingredient), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole, enriched, bran, or germ. The preschool WGR criteria do not require a specific limit for noncreditable grains.</p> <p>Foods made on site: The weight of whole grains in the SFA's standardized recipe is the same as or more than the weight of the other creditable grains.</p> <p>Serving the same WGR foods to preschoolers and grades K-12: Grain foods that meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 will meet the preschool WGR criteria. However, grain foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-5, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see "G7: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals").</p>	<p>Commercial products: Foods must meet three criteria: 1) contain at least 50 percent whole grains; 2) any other creditable grains must be enriched, and 3) any noncreditable grains must be less than 2 percent of the product formula, i.e., no more than 3.99 grams per ounce equivalent for groups A-G (baked goods), and no more than 6.99 grams per ounce equivalent for group H (cereal grains) and group I (ready-to-eat breakfast cereals).</p> <p>Foods made on site: The weight of whole grains in the SFA's standardized recipe is the same as or more than the weight of the enriched grains.</p> <p>Serving the same WGR foods to preschoolers and grades K-12: Grain foods that meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 will meet the preschool WGR criteria. However, grain foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-5, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see "G7: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals").</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G5: WGR Criteria, <i>continued</i>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Identifying Whole Grain-rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</p> <p>How to Spot Whole Grain-Rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</p> <p>USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</p> <p>Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</p> <p>PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</p> <p>Tools for Schools: Serving WGR (USDA website)</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</p> <p>Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (USDA)</p> <p>Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G6: Products Containing Only Enriched Grains (No Whole Grains), e.g., enriched white bread, enriched crackers, enriched white rice, enriched cream of wheat cereal, and enriched corn grits	<p>Crediting: Enriched grain products credit as the grains component if the SFA offers at least one WGR food per day, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers.</p> <p>Resources: ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA) PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>	<p>Crediting: Enriched grain products do not credit as the grains component in school year 2020-21 (see “G4: WGR Requirement”). Enriched grains credit only when they are an ingredient of a WGR product or recipe. Examples include a rice mixture of ¼ cup of brown rice and ¼ cup of enriched rice; and a sandwich made with one slice of enriched white bread and one slice of whole-grain bread. A recipe that contains whole and enriched grains is WGR if the whole grains are equal to or more than the enriched grains.</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA) USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-2021 USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G7: Grain-based Desserts	<p>Restrictions at breakfast, lunch, and snack: Grain-based desserts cannot credit in preschool meals and ASP snacks.</p> <p>Examples of grain-based desserts: Brownies, cookies, cakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple and blueberry), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry and raisin), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE's handouts, Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP and Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP, do not include grain-based desserts.</p> <p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie, and sweet crackers, e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers. The USDA encourages preschool menus to limit sweet crackers because of their higher sugar content. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers.</p>	<p>Restrictions at breakfast: None, however, the inclusion of grain-based desserts cannot cause the menu to exceed the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards), i.e., limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week, and serving nutrient-dense whole grains instead. Grain-based desserts often contain more solid fats and added sugars than traditional grains.</p> <p>Restrictions at lunch: SFAs may offer up to 2 ounce equivalents of grain-based desserts per week as part of the grains component at lunch. Grain-based desserts served as an extra menu item at lunch must count toward the minimum daily and weekly servings of the grains component, including the weekly limit of no more than 2 ounce equivalents of grain-based desserts, and must fit within the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for grades K-12.</p> <p>Examples of grain-based desserts: Sweet crackers (graham crackers and animal crackers), brownies, cookies, cakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple and blueberry), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry and raisin), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE's handout, Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP, indicates grain-based desserts with the footnote 1 (allowed for lunch and breakfast) or 2 (allowed only for breakfast).</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G7: Grain-based Desserts, <i>continued</i>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP (USDA)</p> <p>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (effective October 1, 2021)(CSDE)</p> <p>Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (through September 30, 2021) (CSDE)</p> <p>Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage)</p> <p>USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p> <p>USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</p>	<p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie, and sweet crackers, e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers. The USDA encourages preschool menus to limit sweet crackers because of their higher sugar content. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <p>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</p> <p>Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage)</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</p> <p>USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals	<p>Allowable types: Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (group I) and cooked cereals (group H) such as oatmeal (including regular and instant) and cream of wheat.</p> <p>Crediting criteria: Breakfast cereals must 1) contain a creditable grain (whole or enriched) as the first ingredient or be fortified; 2) meet the sugar limit (see “G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”); and 3) provide the required volume or weight (see “G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Resources: Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE) Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Allowable types: Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (group I) and cooked cereals (group H) such as oatmeal (including regular and instant) and cream of wheat.</p> <p>Crediting criteria: All breakfast cereals must be WGR (see “G9: WGR Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”) and provide the required volume or weight (see “G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Final Rule (83 FR 63775): Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G9: WGR Criteria for Breakfast Cereals	<p>RTE breakfast cereals: The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified. The cereal must also meet the sugar limit (see “G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Cooked breakfast cereals: The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the second ingredient), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole, enriched, bran, or germ. The cereal must also meet the sugar limit (see “G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Serving the same WGR cooked breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12: Cooked breakfast cereals foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p>Resources: Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>	<p>RTE breakfast cereals: The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified. The limit for noncreditable grains does not apply to fortified RTE breakfast cereals that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient.</p> <p>Cooked breakfast cereals: 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the second ingredient); 2) any other grain ingredients must be enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed 6.99 grams. Breakfast cereals that are not WGR must be enriched or fortified.</p> <p>Serving the same WGR cooked breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12: Cooked breakfast cereals foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p>Resources: Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals	<p>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H): The required preschool amount is $\frac{1}{2}$ serving through September 30, 2021, and $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent effective October 1, 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through September 30, 2021: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked or 13 grams dry. Effective October 1, 2021: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked or 14 grams dry. <p>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I): The required preschool amount is in servings through September 30, 2021, and ounce equivalents effective October 1, 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through September 30, 2021: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup or $\frac{1}{3}$ ounce for ages 1-2 (whichever is less) and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup or $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce for ages 3-4 (whichever is less). Effective October 1, 2021: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of flaked or round cereal, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of granola. <p>Resources: PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA) PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA) USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</p>	<p>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H): 1 ounce equivalent equals $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 grams) dry.</p> <p>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I): 1 ounce equivalent equals 1 ounce (28 grams), i.e., 1 cup of flaked or round cereal, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of granola.</p> <p>Resources: Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA) PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals	<p>Limit: Breakfast cereals (RTE and cooked) cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (≤ 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).</p> <p>Resources: Calculating Sugar Limits for Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (USDA) Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar (USDA) Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Limit: None</p> <p>Serving the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12: If SFAs serve the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12, the breakfast cereals must comply with the preschool limit for sugars. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-5 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat in the same service area at the same time (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Noncreditable Foods (NF)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)
NF1: Noncreditable foods	<p>Restrictions: Noncreditable foods cannot credit in the NSLP, SBP, SSO meal patterns. Examples include condiments, potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, and fruit roll-ups. Some noncreditable foods can be served in addition to the snack components to add variety, help improve acceptability, and satisfy appetites. Examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches.</p> <p>Resources: Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>	<p>Restrictions: Noncreditable foods cannot credit in the NSLP, SBP, SSO meal patterns. Examples include condiments, potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, and fruit roll-ups. Some noncreditable foods can be served in addition to the snack components to add variety, help improve acceptability, and satisfy appetites. Examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches.</p> <p>Count toward dietary specifications: All noncreditable foods offered as part of reimbursable meals must count toward the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for school meals. They must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion in school meals cannot cause the weekly menu to exceed the limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium (see “DS1: Dietary Specifications”).</p> <p>Resources: Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

NF2: Water	<p>Requirement: The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act requires that schools must make drinking water available to children at no charge where meals are served during the meal service. Water does not credit as a meal pattern component and cannot be offered in place of the required meal components. Preschool menus cannot offer a choice between water and milk or juice.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs USDA Memo SP 49-2016 and CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities</p>	<p>Same</p>
Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards) (DS)		
Requirement	Preschool Meal Patterns (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)	Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (NSLP, SBP, and SSO)

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

DS1: Dietary Specifications	<p>Weekly requirements: None</p> <p>Other requirements: Sugar limits for yogurt (see “MMA7: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt” and breakfast cereals (see “G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Best practices: The USDA’s <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends additional optional best practices that reflect recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the National Academy of Medicine to help increase children’s consumption of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains; and reduce the consumption of added sugars and saturated fats.</p> <p>Resources: Breakfast Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) CACFP Best Practices (USDA) Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 15-16: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern</p>	<p>Weekly requirements: School meals must, on average, meet the dietary specifications, which include weekly limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium; and require food products served in school meals to contain zero grams of trans fat. For information on the dietary specifications, see the meal patterns for grades K-12 (available on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage) and section 6 of the CSDE’s Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12.</p> <p>Other requirements: None</p> <p>Resources: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</p>
Offer versus Serve (OVS)		
OVS1: Offer versus Serve (OVS)	<p>Lunch: Not allowed.</p> <p>Breakfast: Not allowed.</p>	<p>Lunch: Required in high schools. Optional for middle and elementary schools.</p> <p>Breakfast: Optional for all grades.</p> <p>Resources: Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals (CSDE) OVS for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage) OVS in the School Breakfast Program (CSDE) OVS in the National School Lunch Program (CSDE)</p>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Regulations and Policy

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act-2010>

National School Lunch Program Regulations (7 CFR 210):

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=4c211a738d6109939c6054a6286ac109&mc=true&node=pt7.4.210&rgn=div5>

School Breakfast Program Regulations (7 CFR 220):

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=1efda750af767569cda912c147528a21&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&r=PART&n=pt7.4.220>

School Meals Legislation and Regulations:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/program-legislation-regulations>

USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/04/25/2016-09412/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

USDA Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671): Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/11/01/2016-26339/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

[https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program)

[20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program)

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answer:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/vegetable-and-fruit-requirements-cacfp-qas>

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-requirements-cacfp-questions-and-answers>

USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-based-desserts-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

USDA Memo SP 10-2012 (v9): Q&As on Final Rule “Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs”:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-final-rule-nutrition-standards-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs>

USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-coconut-hominy-corn-masa-and-masa-harina-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/flexibility-co-mingled-preschool-meals-questions-and-answers>

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Resources and Websites

Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program>

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPHandbook.pdf>

Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources>

Laws and Regulations (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Laws-and-Regulations-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/mpgpschool.pdf>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>

Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Operational-Memoranda-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ResourcesPreschoolMealPattern.pdf>

Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

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For more information, review the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP* and *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ComparisonSNP_PreschoolGradesK-12.pdf.

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1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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